



Vol. 618 Rs. 25

# Birbal to the Rescue



Amar Chitra Katha: the Glorious Heritage of India





## BIRBAL TO THE RESCUE

The wit and wisdom of Birbal had endeared him not only to Akbar, but also to a vast majority of the subjects of the Mughal empire. He had the rare distinction of achieving immense popularity during his lifetime, next only to that of Akbar. He was a good administrator, a good soldier and perhaps what pleased Akbar the most—a good jester. Less known is the fact that he was also a good poet. He wrote under the pen-name, "Brahma" and a collection of his poems is preserved in the Bharatpur Museum.

Though popularly known as Birbal, his real name was Maheshdas. It is believed that he belonged to a poor brahmin family of Trivikrampur (now known as Tikawanpur) on the banks of the River Yamuna. But it was only by virtue of his sharp intellect that he rose to be a minister at the court of Akbar. His phenomenal success made many courtiers jealous of him and if the popular accounts are to be believed, they were ever busy plotting against him. According to popular legend even his death, while he was on an expedition to Afghanistan at the head of a large military force, was due to treachery. Though he was killed in the battle, the expedition was successful and subdued the turbulent province.

Akbar was so deeply moved, when he heard the news of Birbal's death, that he burst forth into a couplet and lamented, "Birbal, you never hurt the helpless. You always gave them whatever you had. I am helpless now and yet you have left nothing for me."

Akbar had found in Birbal a true friend and sympathiser. Of the handful of followers of the Din-e-Elahi, the new faith preached by Akbar, there was only one Hindu, Birbal.

*Script:*  
Meera Ugra

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Ram Wazerkar

**AMAR CHITRA KATHA:**

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**Editor : Anant Pai**

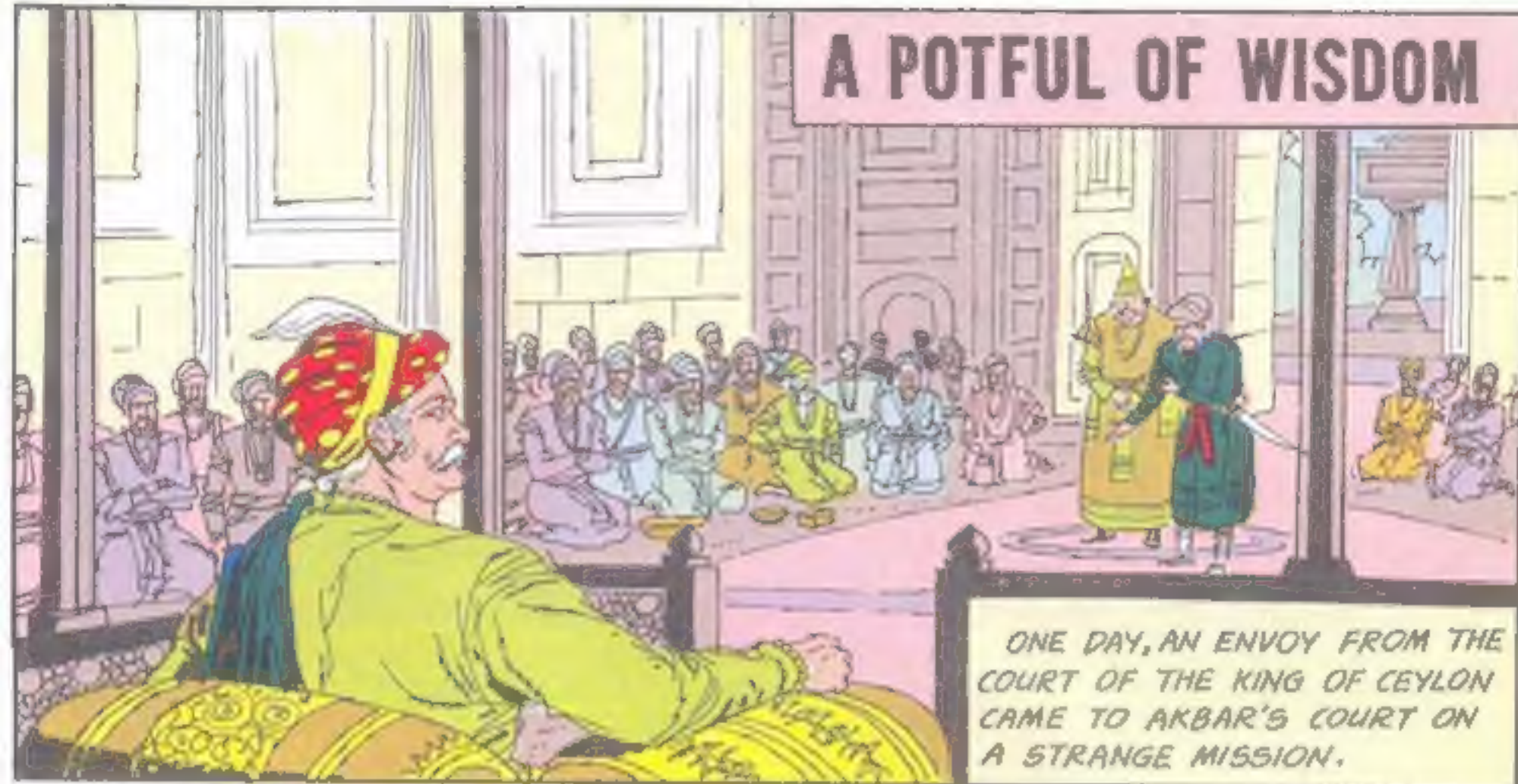
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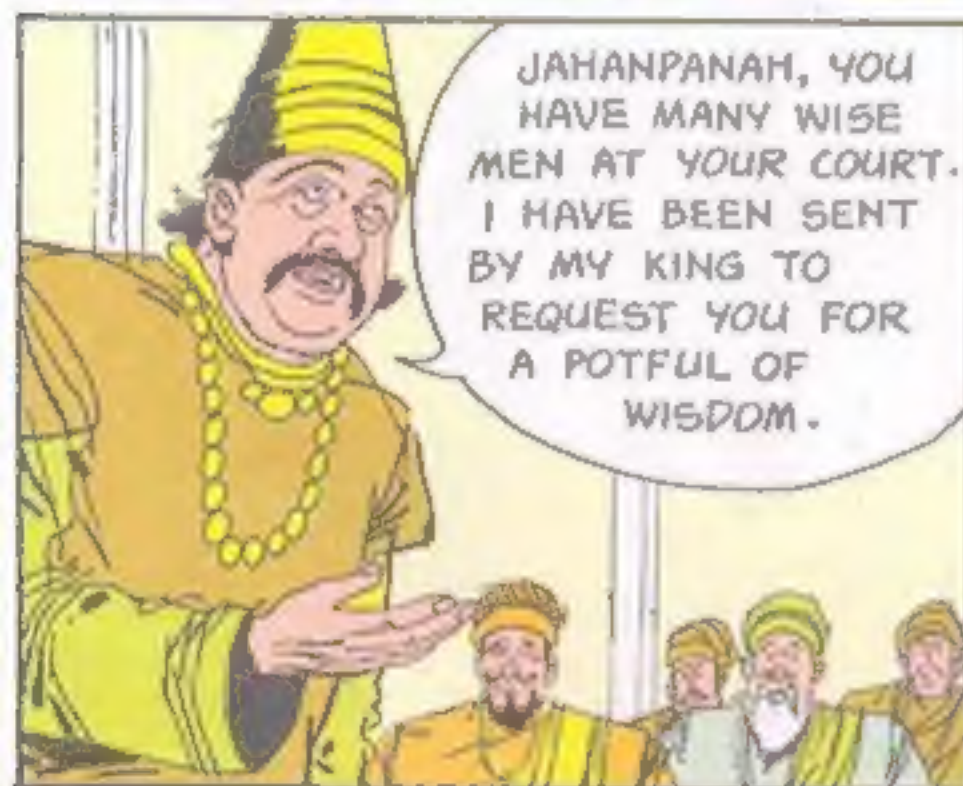
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# A POTFUL OF WISDOM



ONE DAY, AN ENVOY FROM THE COURT OF THE KING OF CEYLON CAME TO AKBAR'S COURT ON A STRANGE MISSION.



JAHANPANAH, YOU HAVE MANY WISE MEN AT YOUR COURT. I HAVE BEEN SENT BY MY KING TO REQUEST YOU FOR A POTFUL OF WISDOM.



A POTFUL OF WISDOM? WHAT A RIDICULOUS REQUEST!



THE KING OF CEYLON IS OUT TO BAFFLE US.

AND HE'LL SUCCEED. NO ONE, NOT EVEN BIRBAL, CAN GET US OUT OF THIS ONE.







AT THE PUMPKIN PATCH —

GIVE ME ONE OF THOSE POTS.



BIRBAL CAREFULLY PLACED THE POT OVER A PUMPKIN FLOWER.



NOW PLACE THE OTHER POTS IN THE SAME MANNER.



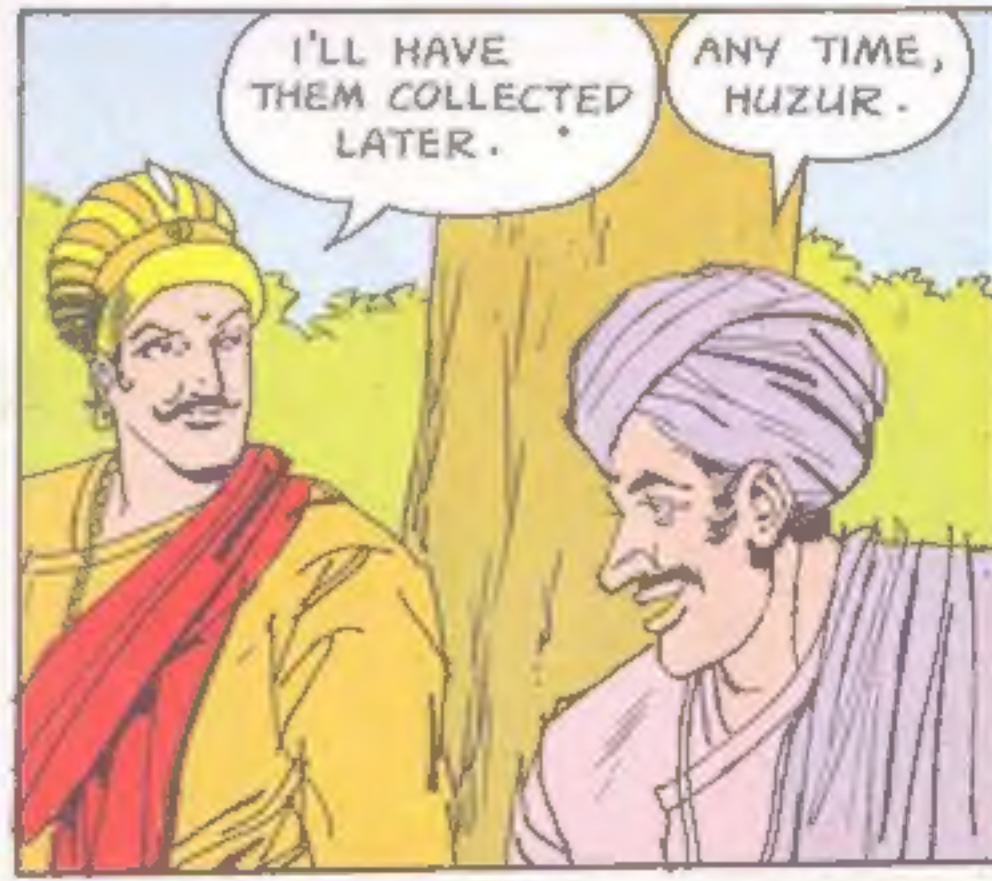
WHEN THE ATTENDANT FINISHED PLACING THE LAST POT —

KEEP AN EYE ON THESE, AND DON'T LET THEM BE MOVED.



I'LL HAVE THEM COLLECTED LATER.

ANY TIME, HUZUR.





A FEW WEEKS LATER —

HAVE YOU MADE ANY PROGRESS, BIRBAL?

YES, JAHANPANA. I'M ALMOST THROUGH WITH THE TASK.

I SHOULD BE ABLE TO HAVE THE POT FILLED IN... SAY... A FORTNIGHT.

A FORTNIGHT LATER —

AHA — NOW THEY ARE ALMOST AS BIG AS THE POTS! GOOD!

YOU SHALL BE HANDSOMELY REWARDED FOR YOUR LABOUR.

LATER BIRBAL HAD THE ENVOY SUMMONED TO COURT.

THE POTFUL OF WISDOM IS READY, JAHANPANA.



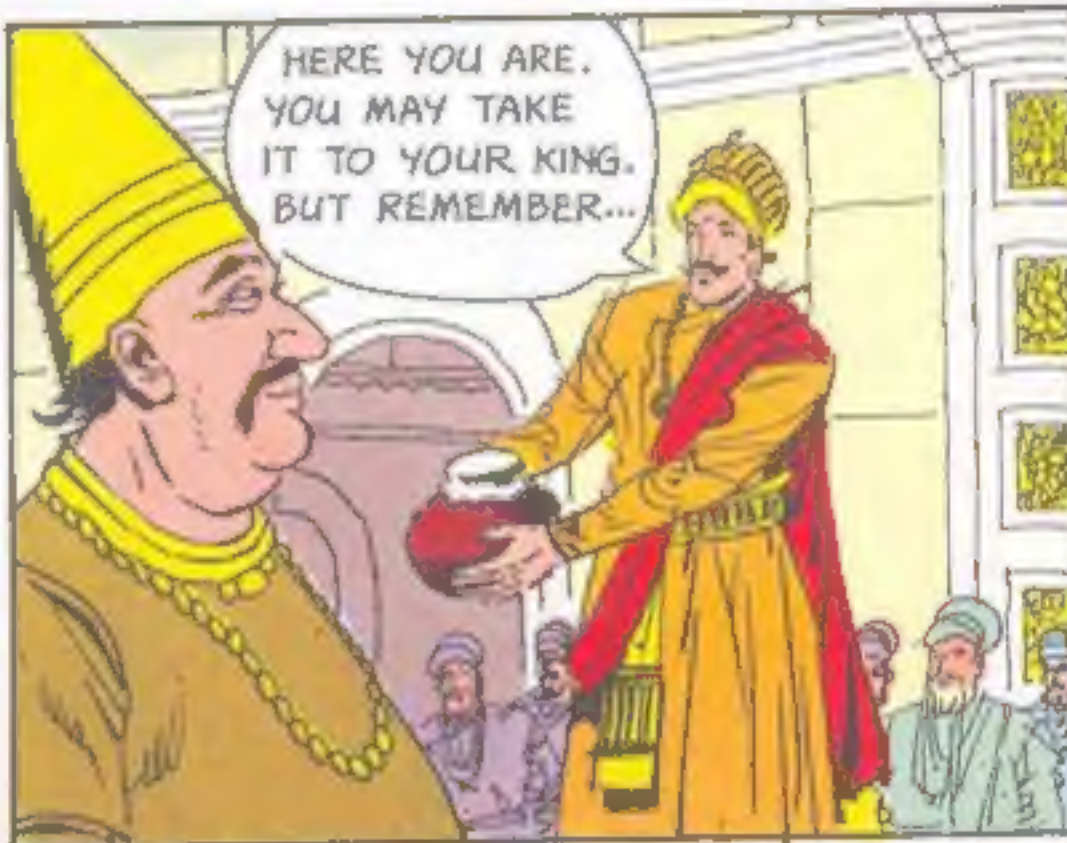
BIRBAL CLAPPED HIS HANDS—



THE NEXT MOMENT, HIS ATTENDANT WALKED SOLEMNLY IN, CARRYING A TRAY WITH A POT ON IT.



HERE YOU ARE. YOU MAY TAKE IT TO YOUR KING. BUT REMEMBER...



...OUR PRECIOUS POT MUST BE RETURNED EMPTY AND INTACT. AND...



...THE FRUIT OF WISDOM THAT IT CONTAINS, TO BE OF ANY VALUE, MUST BE REMOVED WITHOUT A SCRATCH!









AS SOON AS THE ENVOY LEFT—

BIRBAL, I AM CURIOUS  
TO HAVE A LOOK AT  
THE FRUIT OF WISDOM.  
YOU SAID YOU HAVE  
FIVE MORE.

I'LL HAVE  
THEM SENT TO  
YOU, JAHAN-  
PANAHI.



WHEN THE OTHER POTS WERE BROUGHT,  
AKBAR LOOKED INTO ONE OF THEM...



HA! HA! HA! THE FRUIT OF  
WISDOM INDEED! IT WILL  
CERTAINLY MAKE THE KING  
OF CEYLON A WISER MAN,  
THOUGH!





# THE EMPEROR'S TOUCH



ONE DAY, AN OLD WOMAN AND HER WIDOWED DAUGHTER-IN-LAW CAME TO BIRBAL.

MY SON HAD SERVED IN THE ROYAL ARMY FOR TWENTY YEARS. BUT NOW, HE IS DEAD AND WE HAVE NO ONE TO TURN TO!

OUR EMPEROR IS KIND AND GENEROUS. HE WILL HELP YOU. DO AS I SAY.



THE FOLLOWING DAY, AT COURT—

JAHANPANA, THIS SWORD ONCE WIELDED BY MY SON HAS WON MANY BATTLES FOR YOU. SO, PLEASE KEEP IT IN THE ARMOURY.

LET ME SEE IT.

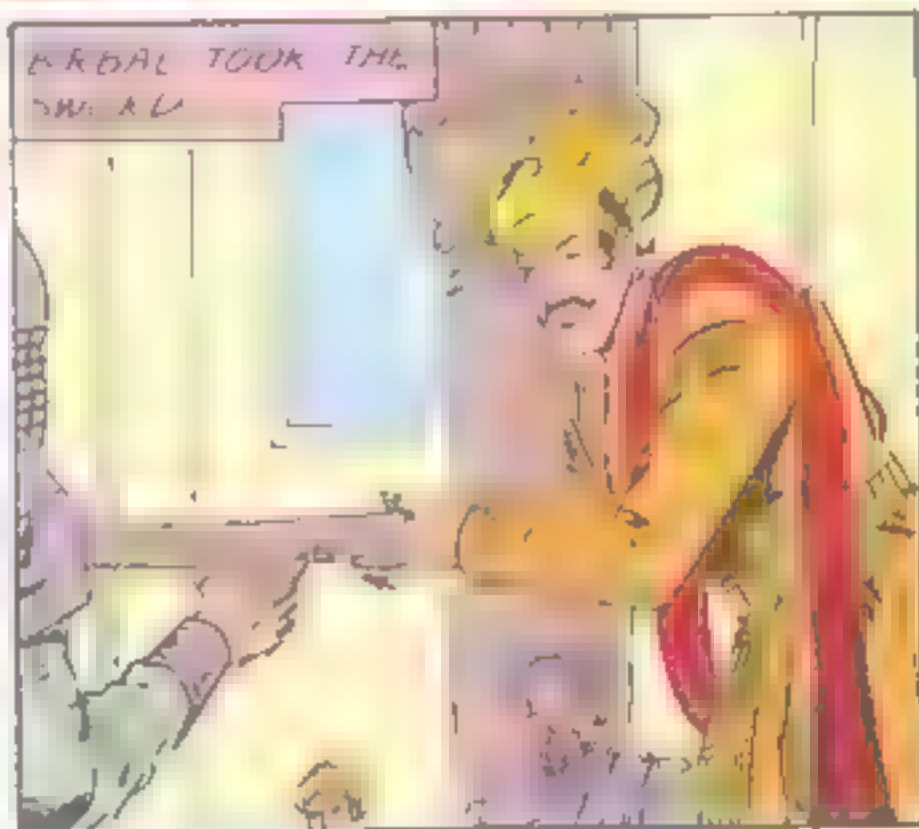
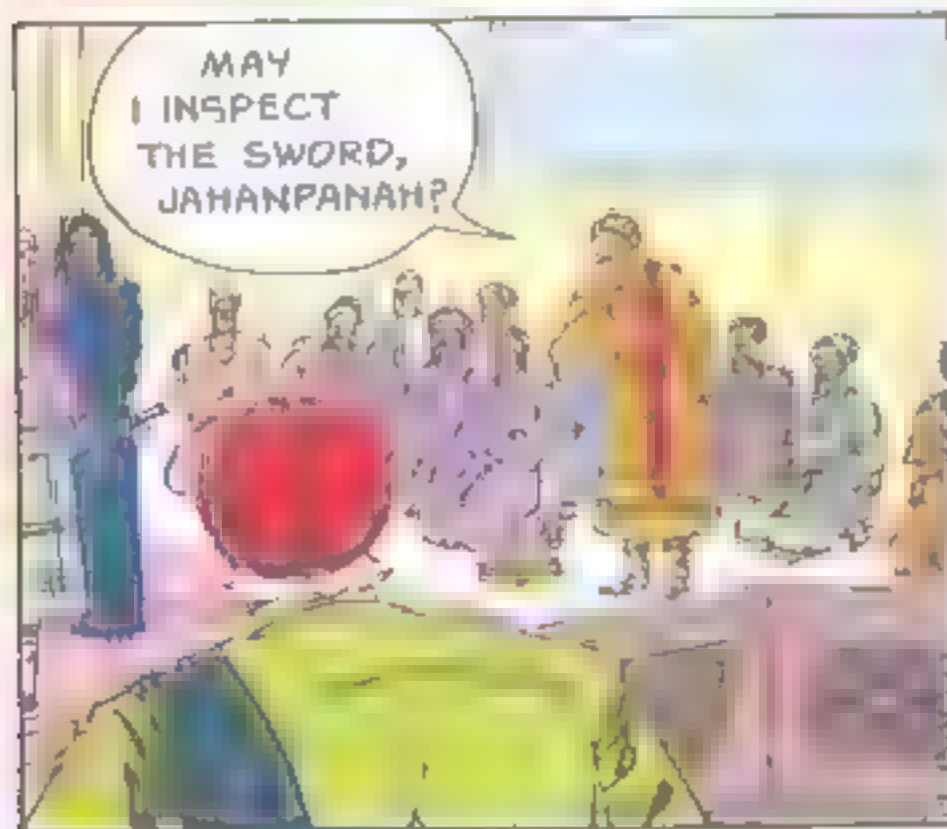


THE SWORD WAS HANDED OVER TO THE EMPEROR. HE EXAMINED IT CAREFULLY.

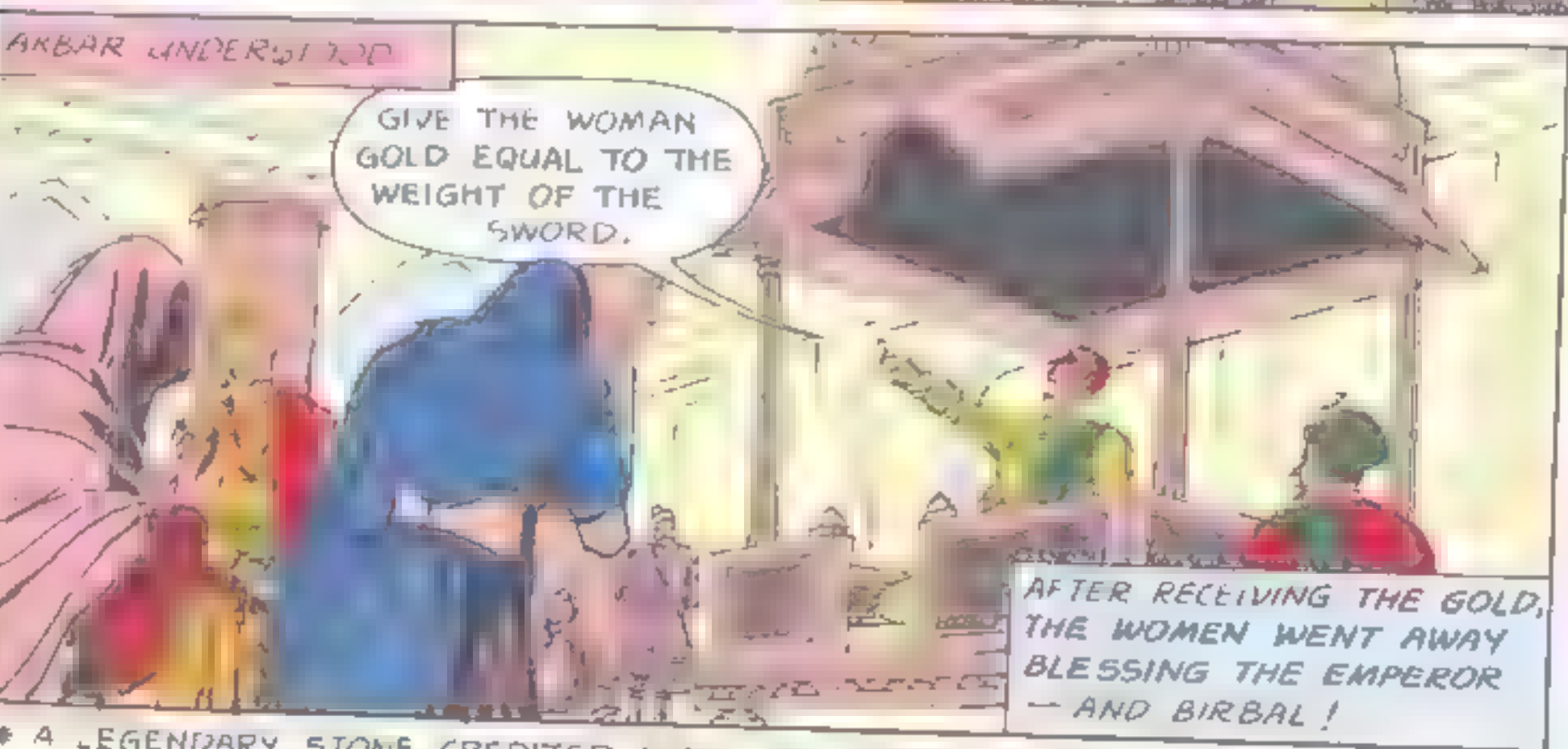
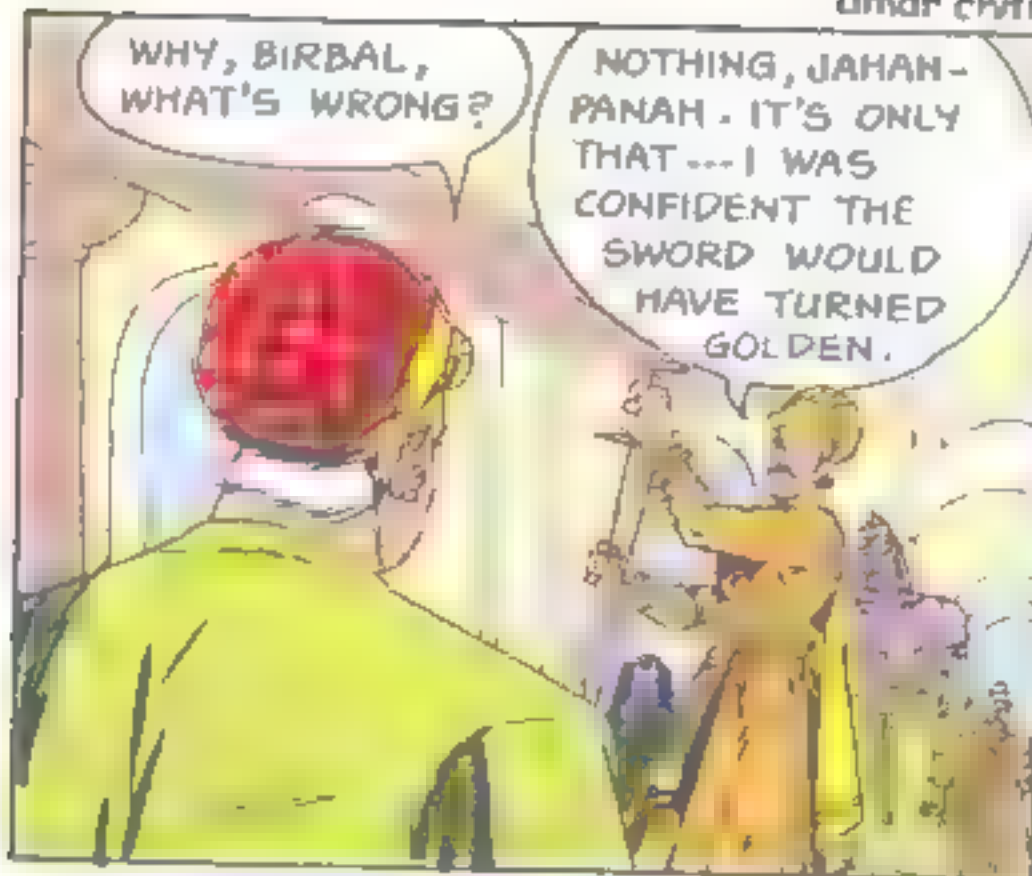
IT'S OLD AND RUSTY... OF NO USE TO US WHATSOEVER.











\* A LEGENDARY STONE CREDITED WITH THE POWER OF CHANGING IRON INTO GOLD



## A WIDOW'S SAVINGS

THE RICH AND THE POOR, THE YOUNG AND THE OLD, ALL SOUGHT BIRBAL'S HELP. WHEN THEY WERE WRONGED ONE DAY AN OLD WIDOW CAME TO SEE HIM.

HELP ME, HUZUR  
I'VE BEEN  
SWINDLED

BY WHOM?

IT'S A LONG STORY,  
HUZUR. SIX MONTHS  
AGO I DECIDED TO  
GO ON A  
PIGRIMAGE

BUT I WAS WORRIED  
ABOUT MY MONEY  
I DIDN'T KNOW  
WHERE TO  
KEEP IT

"FINALLY I WANT TO  
BE A MENDICANT."

HERE IS A BAG OF  
COPPER COINS - ALL THAT  
HAVE IN THIS WORLD  
PLEASE KEEP IT FOR ME.  
IT WILL BE SAFE WITH  
YOU!



I'M SORRY. I CAN'T  
BE INVOLVED IN  
WORLDLY MATTERS.  
I DON'T TOUCH  
MONEY BUT .

...YOU MAY DIG  
A HOLE SOMEWHERE  
IN MY HUT AND  
BURY THE BAG  
THERE YOURSELF.

"I WENT TO A CORNER OF  
THE HUT AND DUG A SMALL HOLE"

MY COINS  
WILL BE  
SAFE HERE.

ON HIS RETURN WHEN HE WENT TO THE MONEY LEND  
TO COLLECT THE MONEY —

WHAT MONEY  
ARE YOU  
TALKING  
ABOUT ?

THE BAG OF  
COINS  
I BURIED  
IN YOUR  
HUT.



YOU KNOW  
WHERE YOU'VE  
BURIED IT! FIND  
IT AND TAKE  
IT.

BUT, DON'T SPEAK  
ABOUT MONEY TO  
ME. I DON'T EVEN  
WANT TO HEAR  
THAT WORD

SO I WENT TO THE MARKET

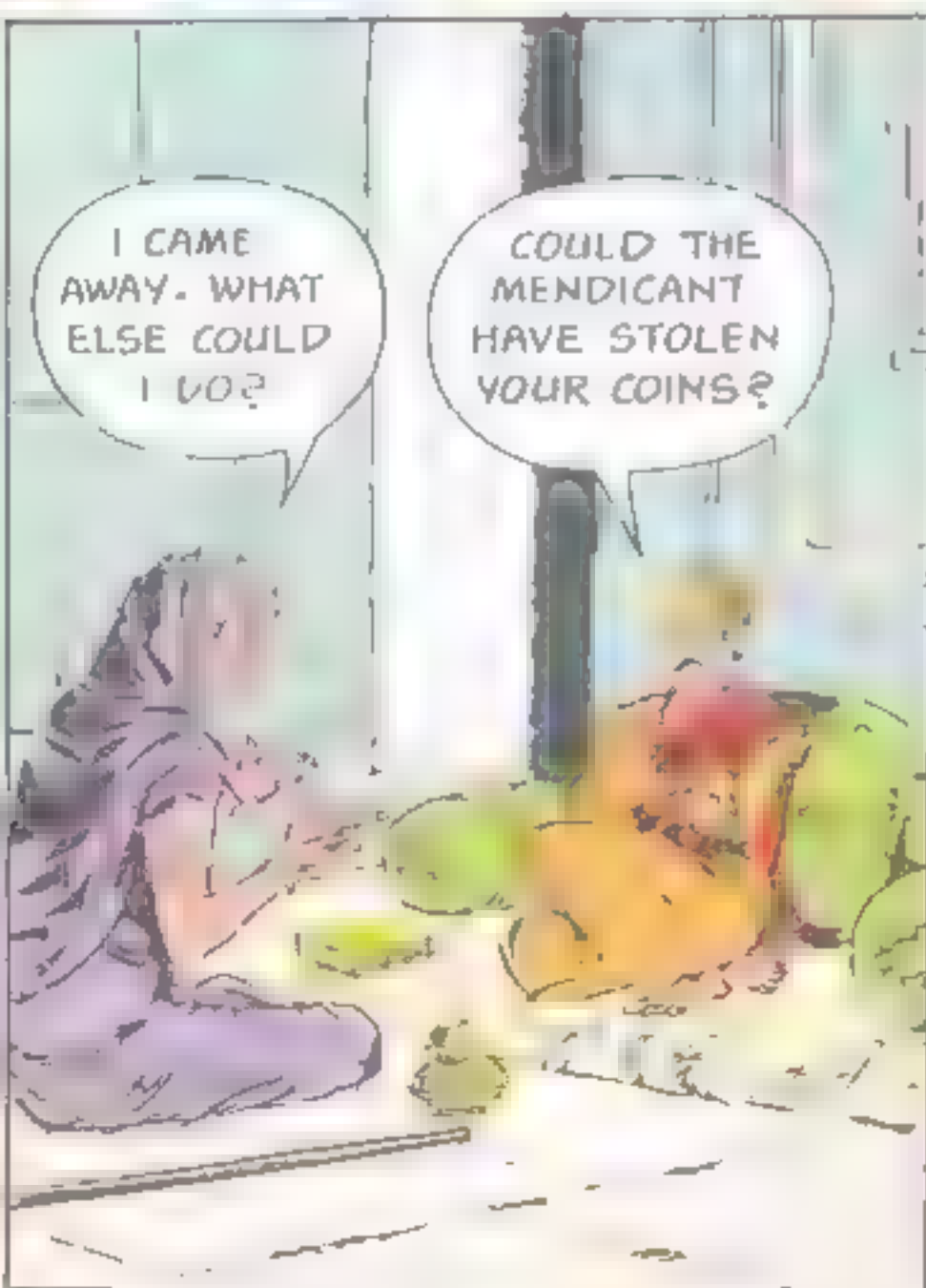
IT'S GONE!

"I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES"

O HOLY ONE,  
MY COINS! WHERE  
ARE MY COINS?

BEGONE,  
WOMAN. DON'T  
BOTHER ME WITH  
SUCH WORLDLY  
MATTERS.









WELL, WE'LL SOON  
FIND OUT.  
LISTEN CAREFULLY...

A LITTLE LATER



THAT'S  
THE PLACE,  
HUZUR.



GOOD. NOW  
HIDE BEHIND THIS  
TREE. AND REMEM-  
BER, YOU MUST WALK  
INTO THE HUT ONLY  
WHEN I FALL AT HIS  
FEET FOR THE  
SECOND TIME.



NOT A MOMENT  
EARLIER NOR  
A MOMENT  
LATER

I WILL ENTER  
THE HUT AT THE  
EXACT MOMENT,  
HUZUR



BIRBAL WENT INTO THE HUT AND FELL PROSTRATE IN FRONT OF THE MENDICANT.

BLESS ME, MASTER.

MAY YOU LIVE LONG, MY CHILD.

I HAVE HEARD PEOPLE TALK ABOUT YOUR SPIRITUAL EMINENCE. TODAY I HAVE HAD THE GOOD FORTUNE OF RECEIVING YOUR BLESSINGS.

I WONDER WHAT HE HAS IN THE CASKET. GOLD? JEWELS?

HOLY ONE, I HATE TO TROUBLE YOU WITH THE PROBLEMS WE FOOLISH MORTALS HAVE. BUT .

SPEAK UP, CHILD. LET ME HELP YOU IF I CAN.

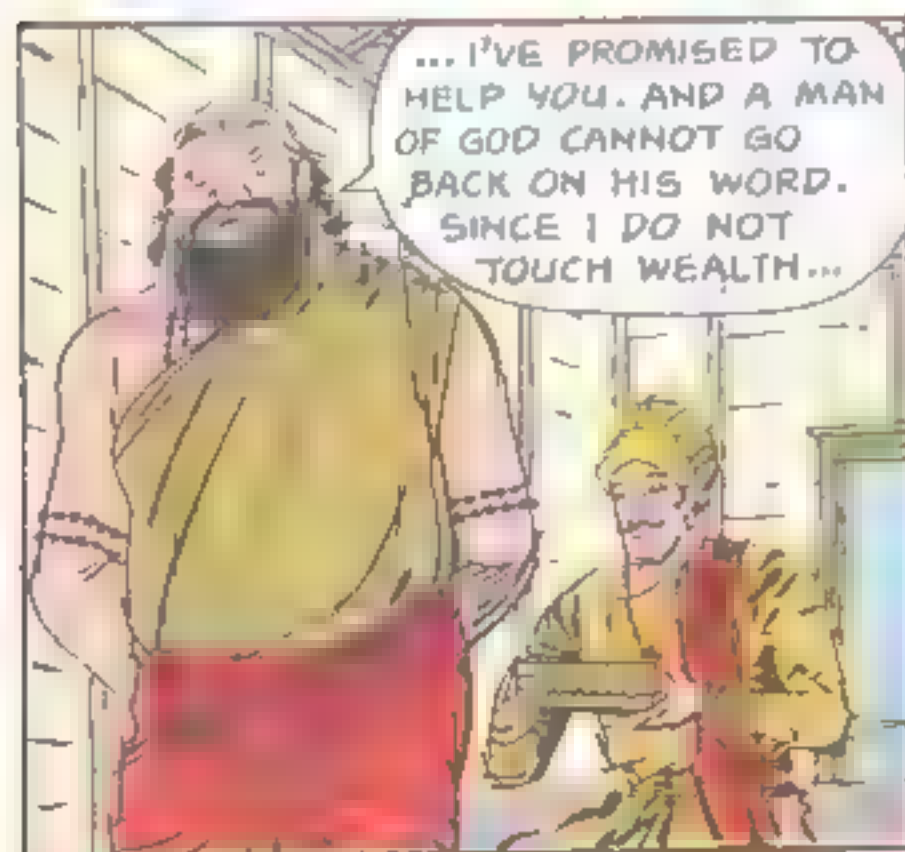
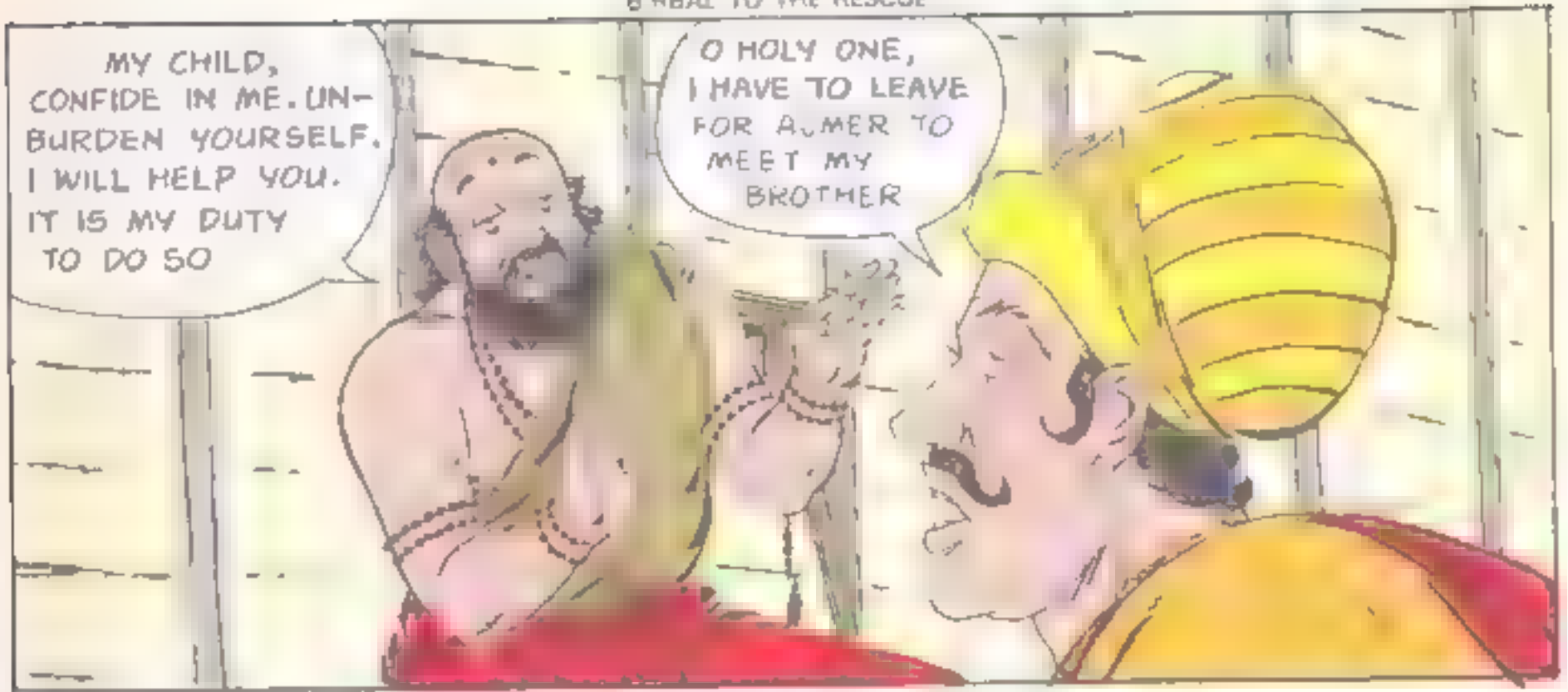
NO, SIR YOU MUSTN'T YOU ARE A MAN OF GOD. I SHOULDN'T BURDEN YOU WITH WORLDLY WORRIES.

WHAT! IS HE GOING AWAY WITH THE CASKET?

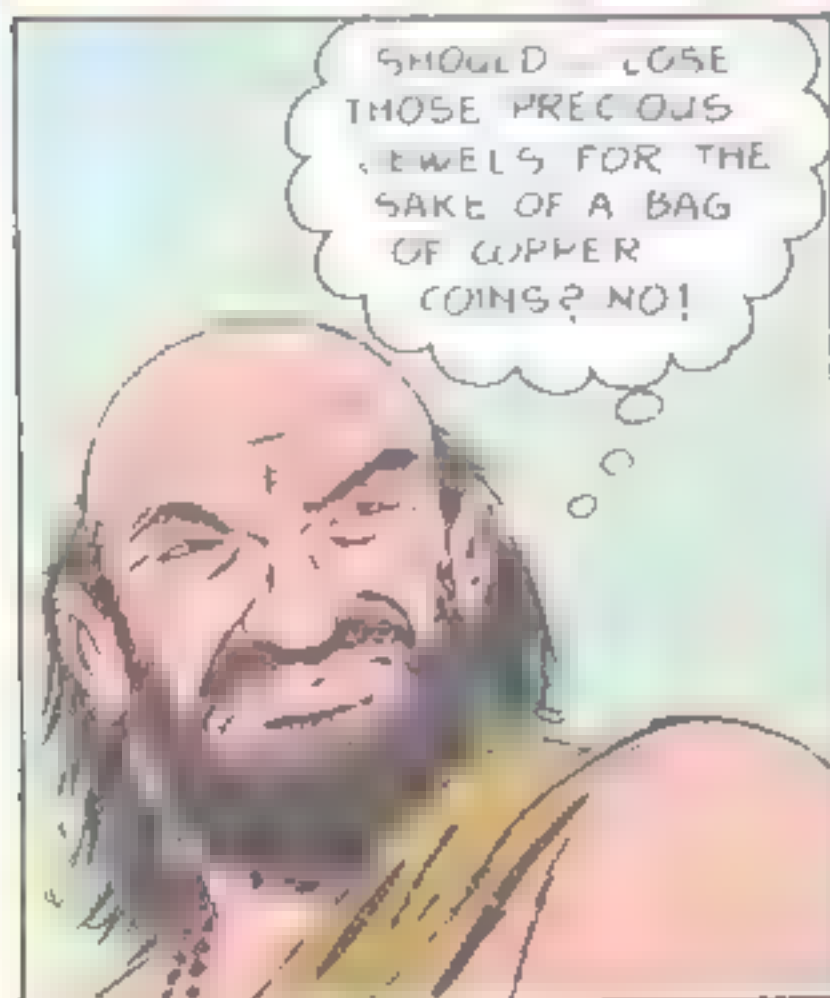
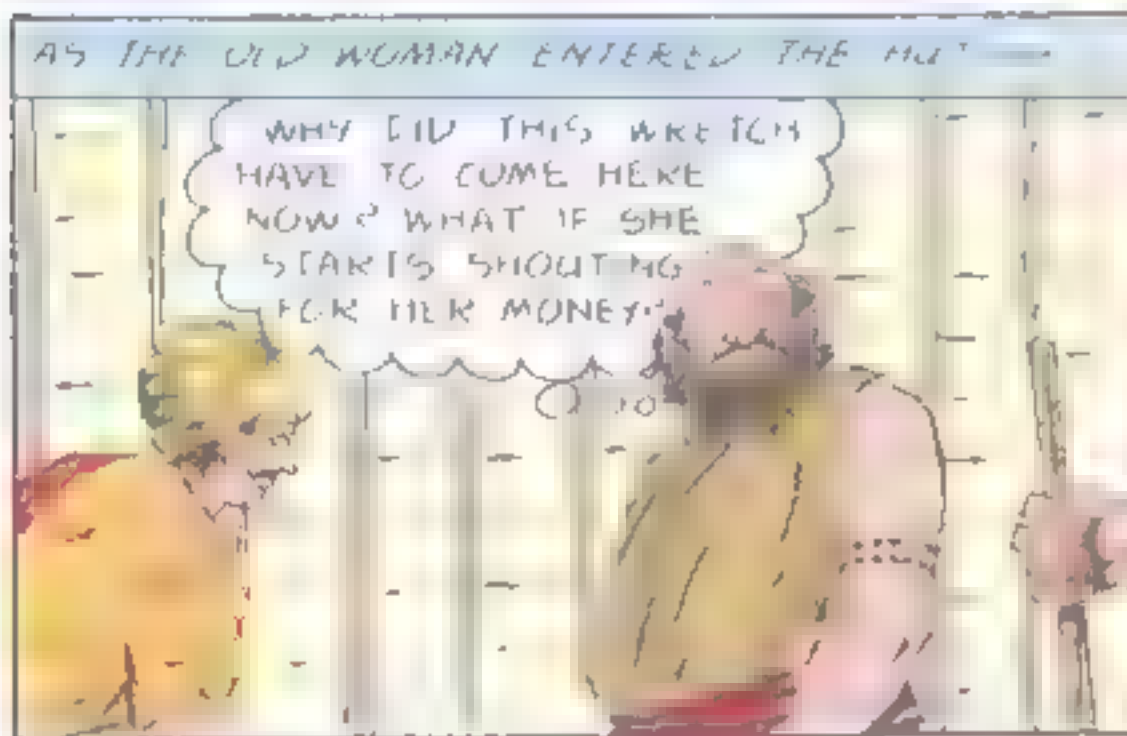
BUT BUT WHO ELSE CAN I TRUST IN THIS WICKED, WICKED WORLD & PLEASE GUIDE ME.

HE IS WAVERING. I MUST LAY HANDS ON THAT CASKET.

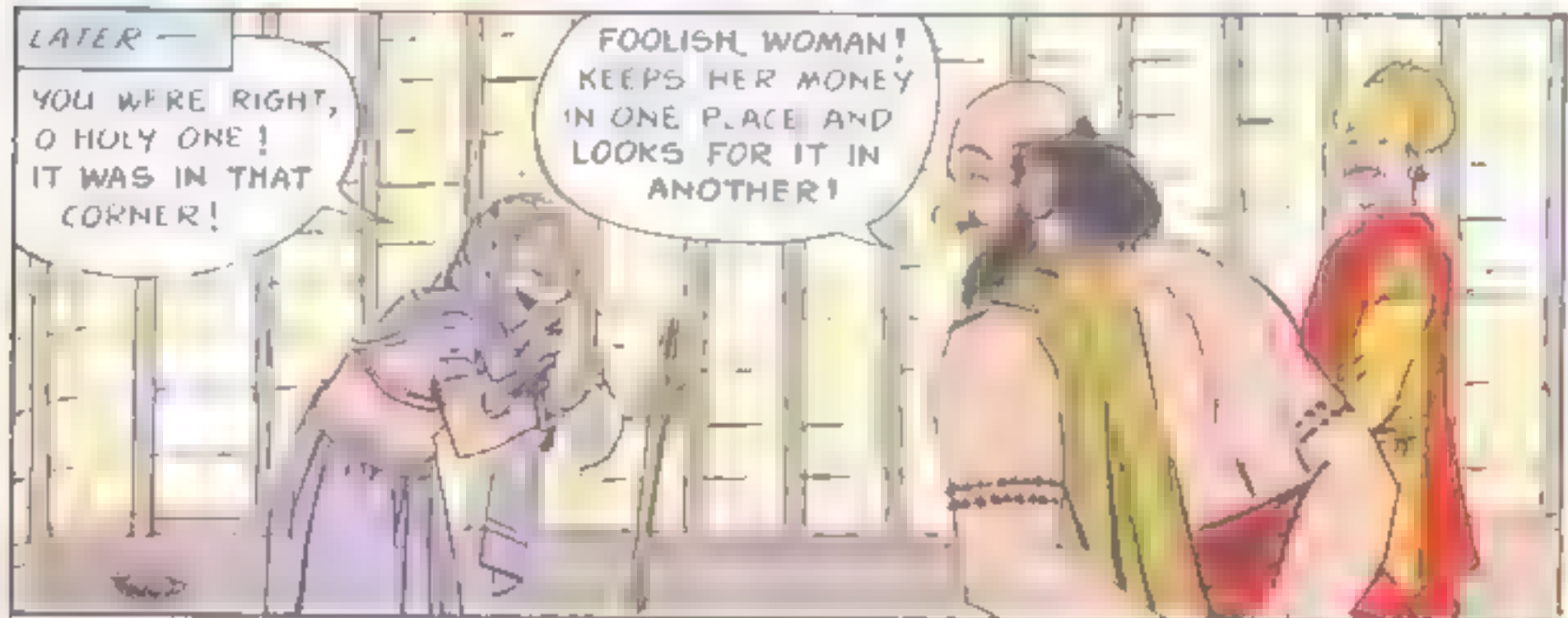


















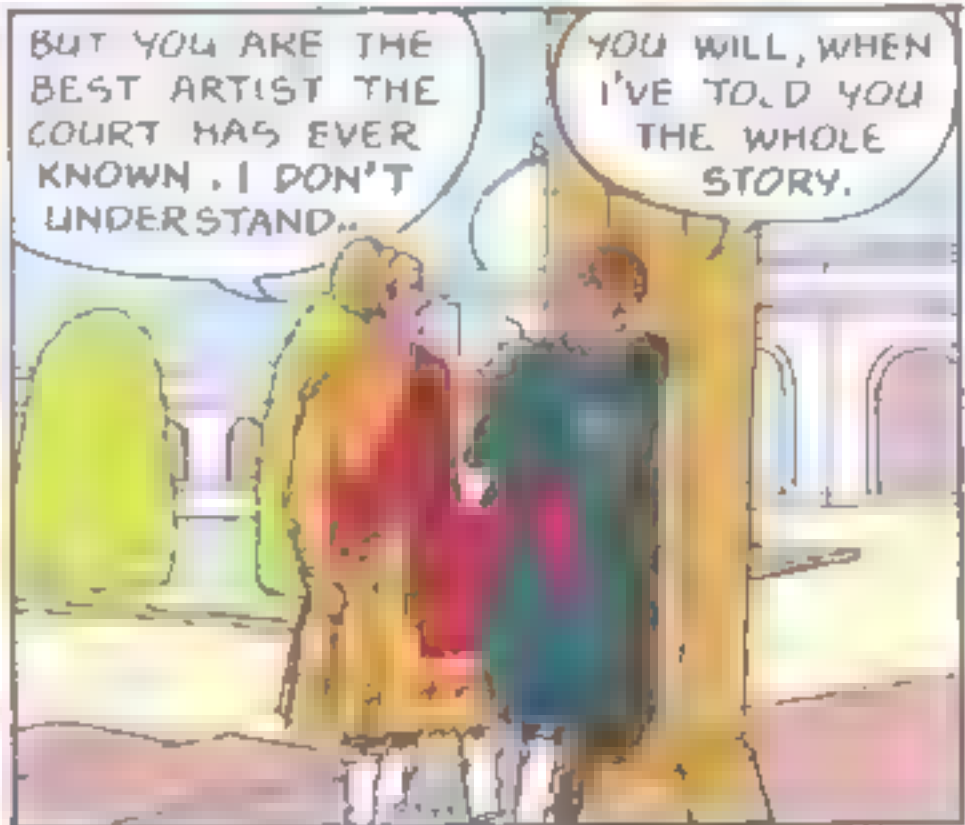
# THE PERFECT PORTRAIT

ONE DAY, BIRBAL WAS SURPRISED TO FIND THE NORMALLY CHEERFUL COURT ARTIST LOOKING GLUM.



BUT YOU ARE THE BEST ARTIST THE COURT HAS EVER KNOWN. I DON'T UNDERSTAND..

YOU WILL, WHEN I'VE TOLD YOU THE WHOLE STORY.



THE ARTIST TOOK BIRBAL TO HIS HOUSE AND SHOWED HIM FIVE PORTRAITS

THEY ARE OF A RICH NOBLE.

AREN'T THESE OF THE SAME MAN?





"A MONTH AGO HE THREW ME  
A CHALLENGE."

I BET, YOU CAN'T  
CREATE AN EXACT  
LIKENESS OF  
ME.

I BET.  
CAN

"HE POSED AND I GOT DOWN TO WORK.  
AT LAST —"

THAT'S ALL I'LL  
GIVE THE PORTRAIT  
A FEW FINISHING  
TOUCHES AND  
BRING IT TO YOU  
TOMORROW.

"ON THE FOLLOWING DAY, WHEN I HANDED  
THE PORTRAIT TO HIM, CONFIDENT OF  
WINNING THE BET —"

THIS WON'T DO!  
IT ISN'T AN EXACT  
LIKENESS. I DON'T  
HAVE A BEARD!

BUT YOU DID  
HAVE ONE  
WHEN YOU  
POSED FOR  
THE PORTRAIT!

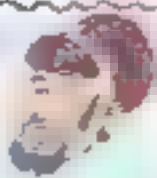
A BET IS A BET! AND AN EXACT  
LIKENESS AN EXACT LIKENESS!  
HERE! YOU MAY KEEP THIS AS  
A MEMENTO

PLEASE GIVE  
ME ANOTHER  
CHANCE.

ALL RIGHT  
YOU MAY  
TRY AGAIN.



"HE POSED FOR ME ONCE MORE WHEN I TOOK THE FINISHED PORTRAIT TO HIM —"



BUT WHY THIS MOUSTACHE?

DO I HAVE A MOUSTACHE?

YOU'VE SHAVED IT OFF TODAY.

NO MORE OF YOUR CHEEK, YOUNG MAN! THE COURT WILL SOON KNOW WHAT KIND OF ARTIST YOU ARE!

NO! PLEASE GIVE ME ANOTHER CHANCE!

ONLY AFTER FIVE SUCH SITTINGS, DID I REALISE THAT HE WAS OUT TO RUIN MY REPUTATION!

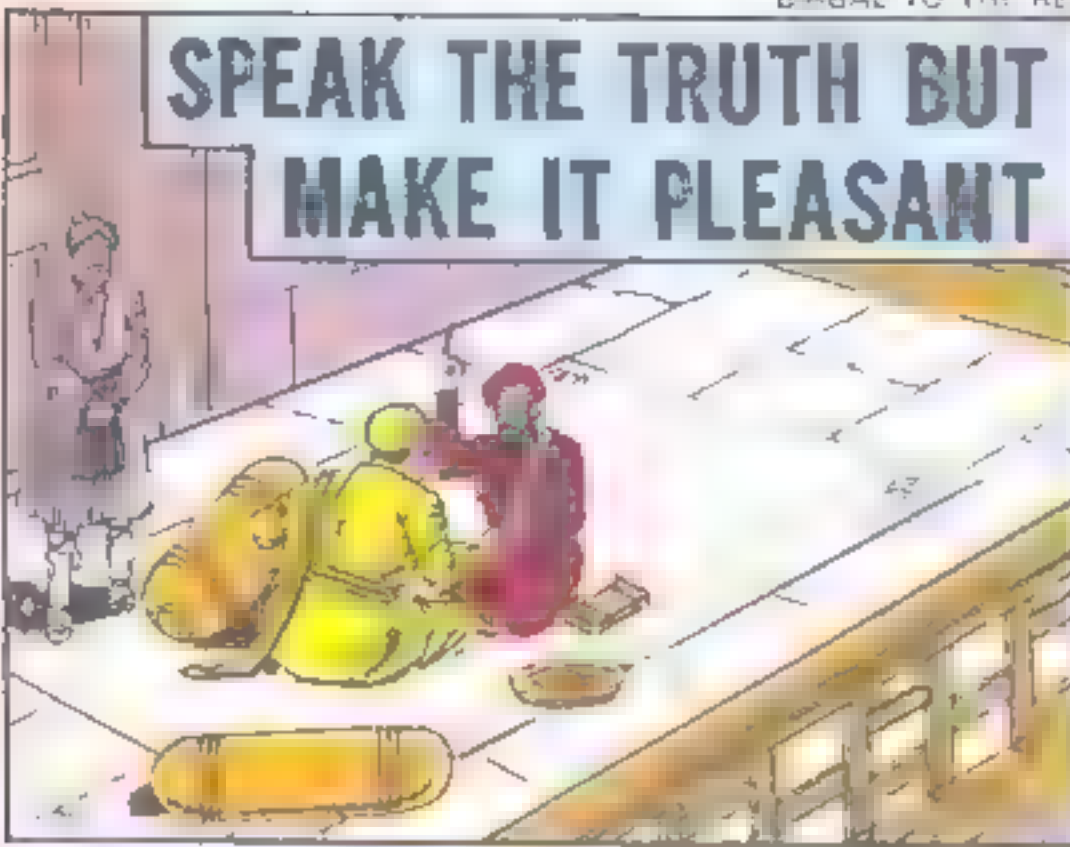
OH WHAT A FOOL I'VE BEEN! HOW COULD I...







# SPEAK THE TRUTH BUT MAKE IT PLEASANT



IF BIRBAL'S NEIGHBOUR HAD A WEAKNESS, IT WAS TO HAVE HIS FORTUNE TOLD

SUDDENLY —

YOU FRAUD! DON'T YOU DARE COME THIS WAY AGAIN!



I WON'T! EVER!



BIRBAL WENT UP TO THE MAN.

WHAT DID YOU DO TO MAKE HIM SO ANGRY?









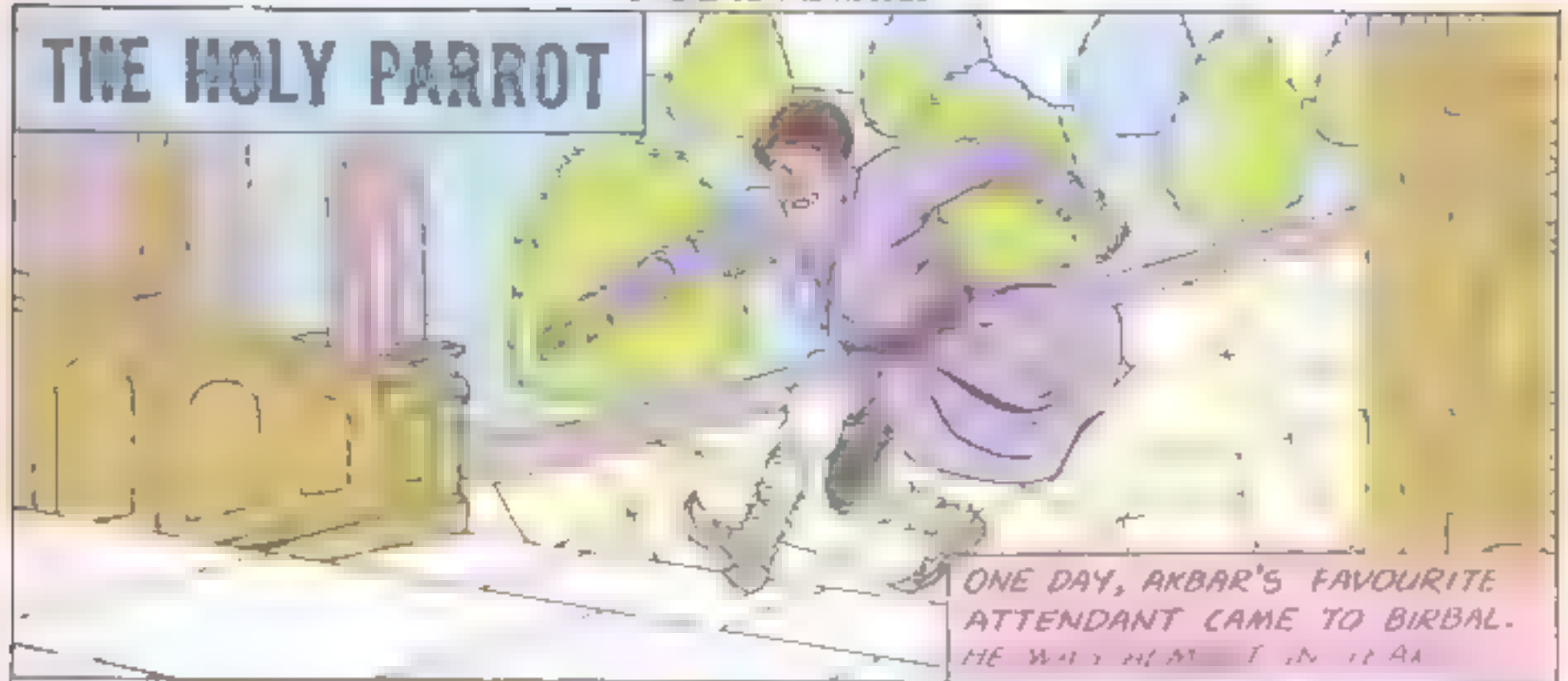








# THE HOLY PARROT



ONE DAY, AKBAR'S FAVOURITE ATTENDANT CAME TO BIRBAL. HE WAS HEAVY IN DEATH



HUZUR! HUZUR!  
YOU'VE GOT TO  
HELP ME! ONLY  
YOU CAN SAVE  
MY LIFE. I...  
THE EMPEROR

YES  
GO ON



A FEW MONTHS AGO, THE EMPEROR  
GAVE ME A PARROT

IT'S A VERY SPECIAL  
BIRD, A HOLY MAN  
GIFT TO ME. TAKE  
GOOD CARE OF  
IT.



SHOULD ANYONE  
BRING ME NEWS  
OF ITS DEATH,  
I'LL BEHEAD  
HIM!



AND NOW AND  
NOW IN SPITE OF  
MY LOVING CARE,  
IT SUDDENLY  
DIED. WHAT  
SHALL I DO?

IS THAT ALL? LEAVE  
IT TO ME I'LL TAKE  
THE NEWS TO THE  
EMPEROR, AND YET  
SAVE MY HEAD!



LATER AT AKBAR'S COURT

JAHANPANA, DO YOU REMEMBER THE PARROT THAT FAKIR GAVE YOU? IT'S A HOLY BIRD INDEED!

A HOLY BIRD, INDEED. HA! HA! HA!

IT IS, JAHANPANA. I HAD GONE TO SEE IT. AND WHAT DO YOU THINK IT WAS DOING?

MEDITATING! WITH ITS EYES CLOSED AND ITS HEAD TURNED SKY-WARDS!

YOU MUST BE JOKING

SO THE TWO WENT TO THE ATTENDANT'S HOUSE. WHEN AKBAR SAW THE BIRD —

BIRBAL MAY BE WISE AND CLEVER! BUT THERE IS A LIMIT

THIS BIRD IS DEAD! AND DON'T TELL ME YOU DIDN'T KNOW IT.

WELL! BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO BE BEHEADED!

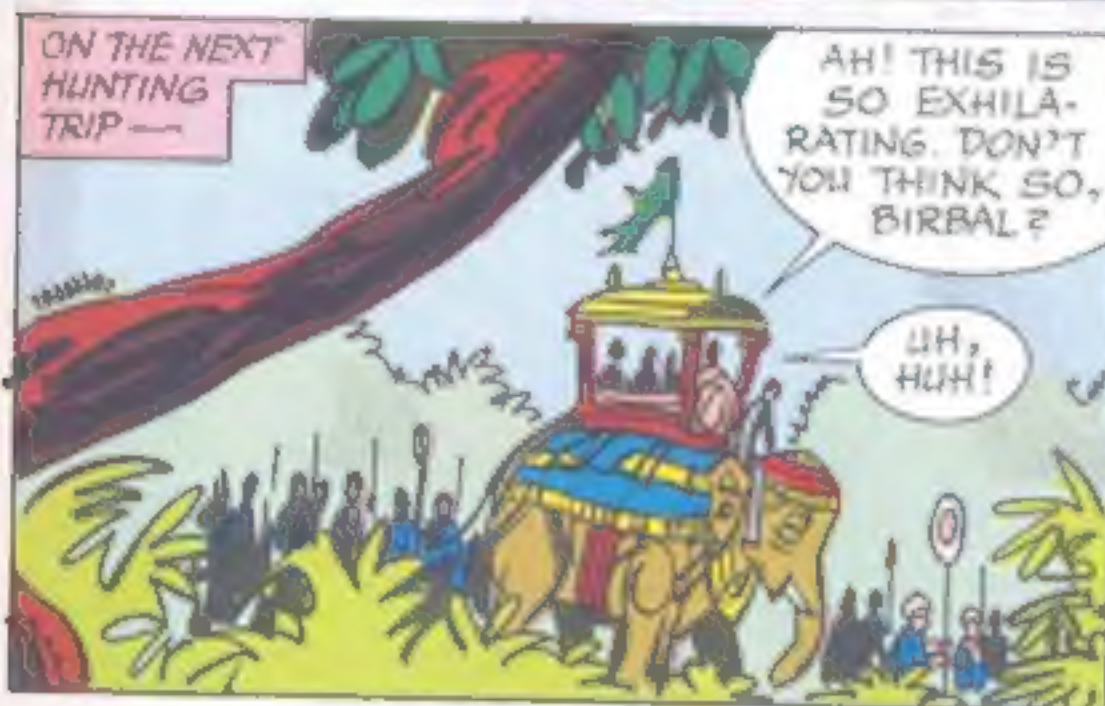
ONLY THEN DID AKBAR REMEMBER WHAT HE HAD TOLD HIS ATTENDANT.

WELL! WELL! WELL! YOU'VE SAVED YET ANOTHER HEAD, BIRBAL. AND I'M GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR IT.

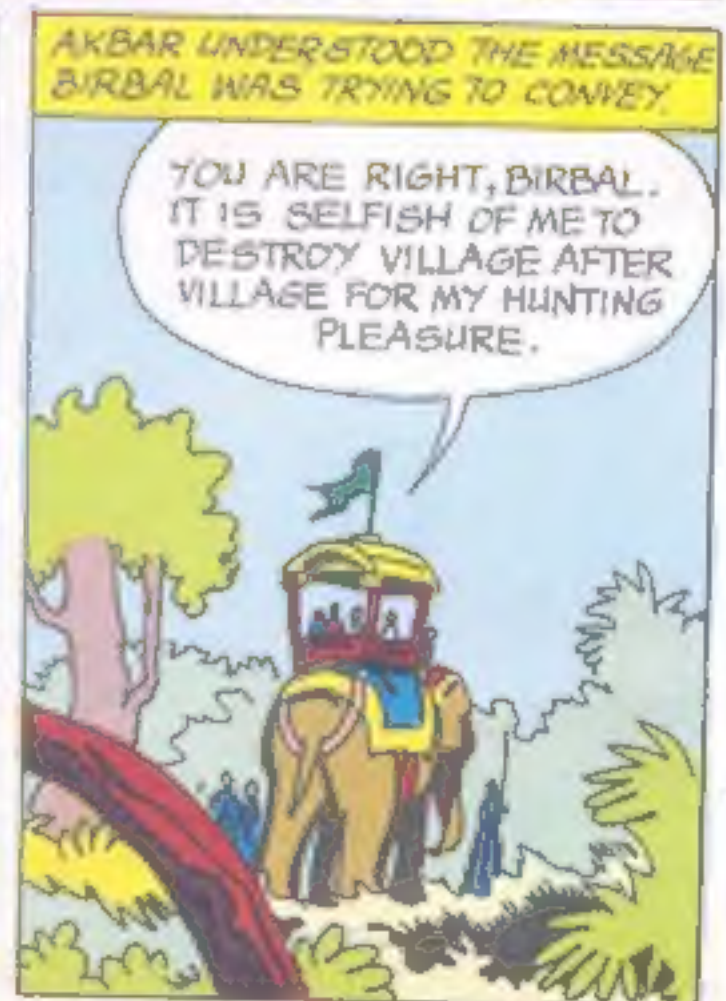
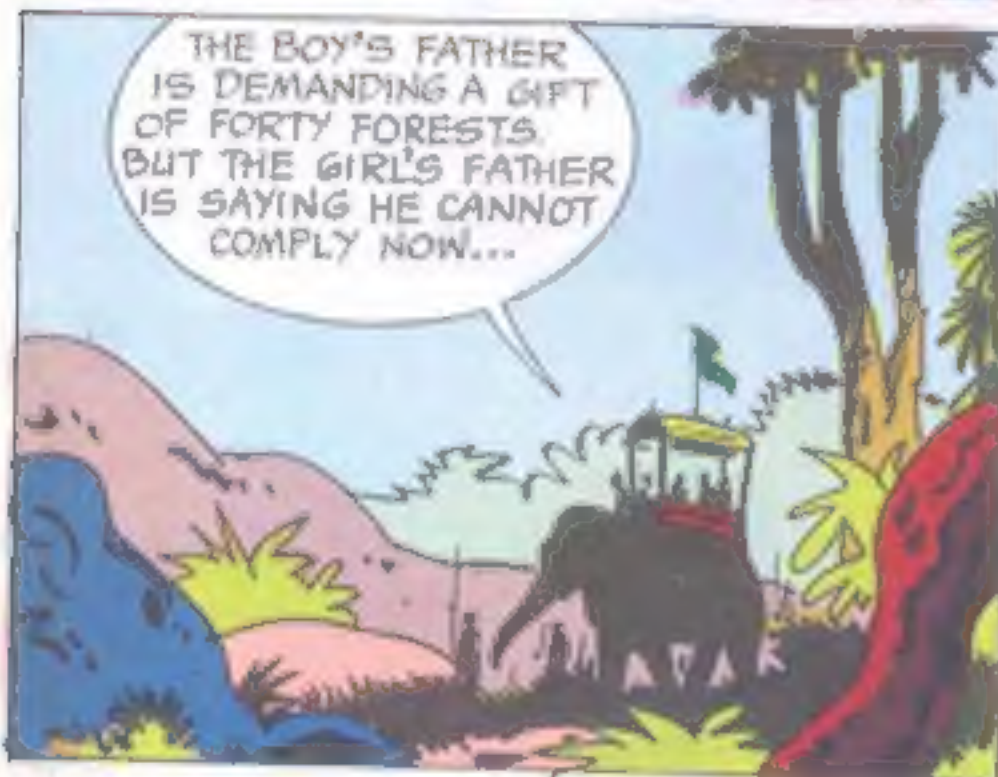
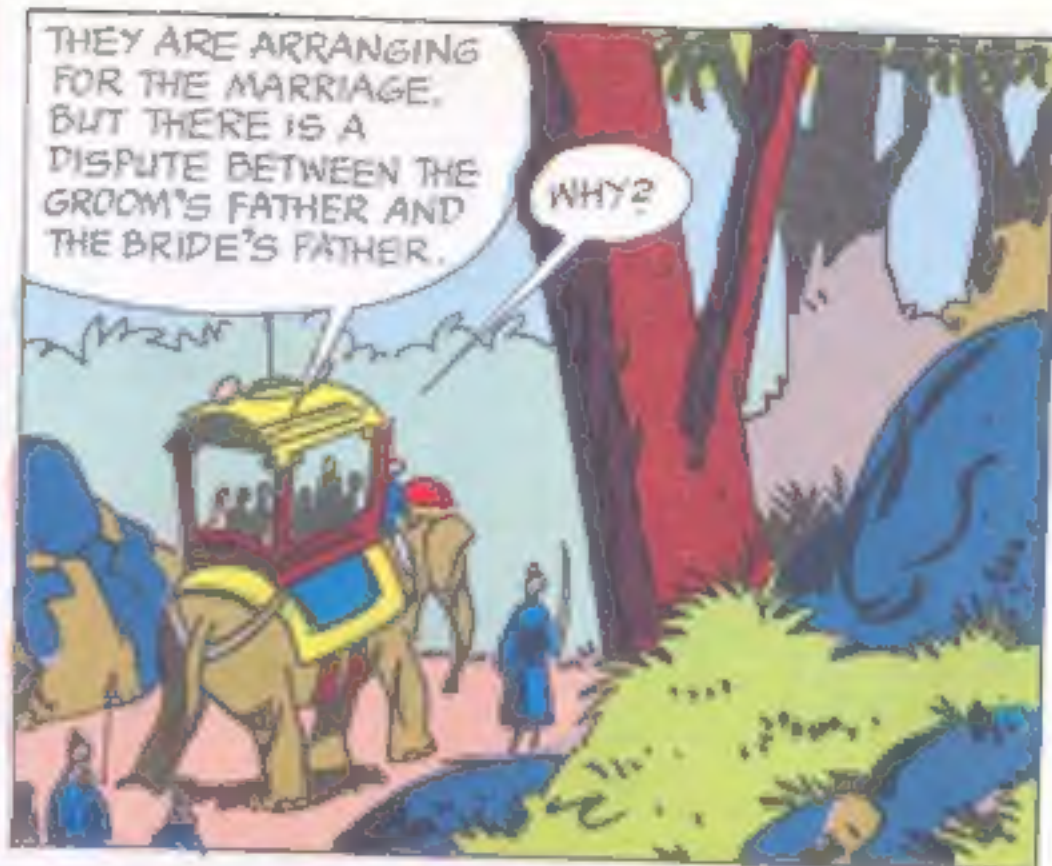


# AKBAR THE HUNTER

AKBAR WAS EXTREMELY FOND OF HUNTING. ONE DAY—

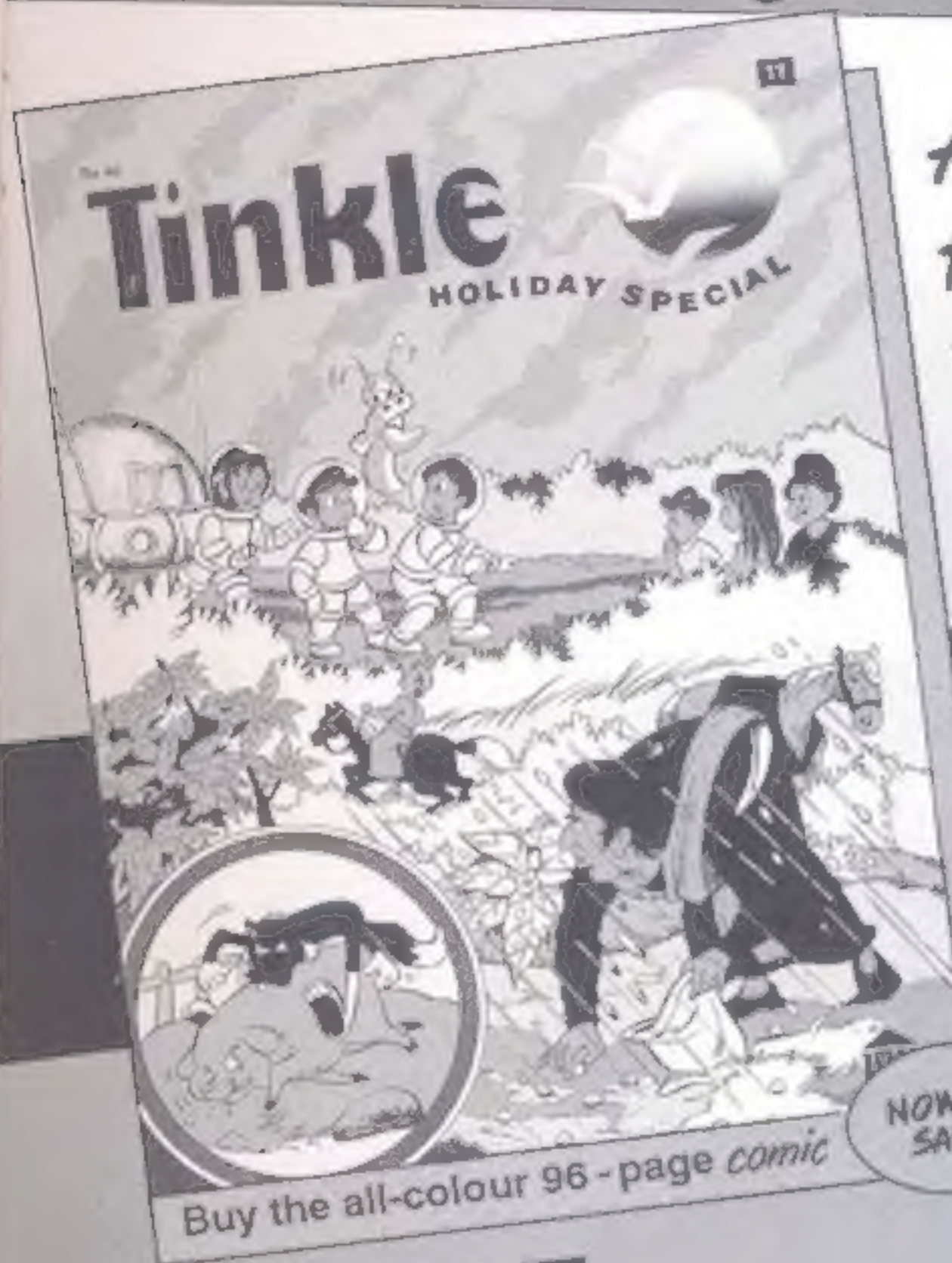








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Peel the yellow protective paper.



Place the transfer (front side up) on the skin and press down firmly.



Rub on top of the transfer area with any blunt object for a few seconds.



Remove the top layer.



See. You don't even need water!

**PERFETTI**